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New York

President:	Mr. Ikouebe	(Congo)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Apparicio da Silva
	China	Mr. Zhang Yishan
	Denmark	Ms. Løj
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Ghana	Nana Effah-Apenteng
	Greece	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan	Mr. Oshima
	Peru	Mr. De Rivero
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Nasser
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America	Mr. Brencick

Agenda

The situation in Timor-Leste

End of mandate report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (S/2006/251)

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06-33983 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to begin this meeting by paying tribute, on behalf of the Council, to His Excellency Mr. Wang Guangya, Permanent Representative of China, for his service as President of the Security Council for the month of April 2006. I am sure that I speak for all members of the Council in expressing deep appreciation to Ambassador Wang for the great diplomatic skill with which he conducted the Council's business last month.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Timor-Leste

End of mandate report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (S/2006/251)

The President (*spoke in French*): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Australia, Austria, Brazil, Indonesia, Malaysia, New Zealand, Portugal, Singapore, Thailand and Timor-Leste in which they request to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Ramos-Horta (Timor-Leste) took a seat at the Council table; the representatives of the other aforementioned countries took the seats reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President (*spoke in French*): In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of Mission of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste.

It is so decided.

I invite Mr. Hasegawa to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2006/251, which contains the end of mandate report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste.

I wish to draw the attention of members to document S/2006/230, containing the text of a letter dated 10 April 2006 from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Timor-Leste addressed to the Secretary-General.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste and Head of Mission of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste.

I now give him the floor.

Mr. Hasegawa: It is my privilege to address the Security Council as it considers the Secretary-General's end of mandate report on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). I wish at the outset to acknowledge the presence today of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, who has made a special effort to come to New York in the midst of the crisis that Timor-Leste is going through.

This Security Council meeting is indeed critically important for Timor-Leste, as the Council is expected to decide on how best to respond to the requests for continued United Nations assistance, as set forth in three separate letters addressed to the Secretary-General by Timorese leaders. As the situation in Timor-Leste has undergone a rapid change since the Secretary-General's report was issued two weeks ago, it is also pertinent for Council members to adjust their perceptions and assumptions. It was very helpful of the

Council to decide a week ago to postpone the meeting to enable Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta to appear before it to personally provide an insight into the recent political and security developments and the future requirements for international assistance to Timor-Leste.

This morning I wish first to provide the Council with a brief overview and the context of the most recent security and political developments; secondly, to inform it about the arrangements and progress made for a smooth transition to a sustainable development assistance framework; and finally, to set out the rationale for establishing an integrated office after UNOTIL completes its mandate in order to meet the electoral security and political requirements identified by the Timorese leaders.

I would like to start with a brief account of the latest security and political developments in Timor-Leste relating to the dismissal since mid-March of 594 soldiers — more than one third of the armed forces — from the Timorese defence force (F-FDTL). The dismissed soldiers staged a demonstration demanding that an independent commission be established to address the issue of discrimination and to seek a fair investigation into their grievances. The 594 former members of the F-FDTL remained peaceful throughout the duration of the demonstrations, over four days. However, on Friday last week, a mob of "non-594" youths and some political elements broke off from the camping group and attacked the Government office building. As the Policia National de Timor-Leste (PNTL) force was not able to deal with the situation and retreated, the Government decided to deploy the military to restore law and order.

During the riots, Government offices were damaged and numerous properties — including cars, shops and houses — were destroyed. According to the Government's estimate, 45 houses were totally destroyed and 116 were damaged. While the physical damage caused to properties was minuscule in comparison with the destruction that took place in 1999, the psychological impact on the people proved to be immense. As many as 14,000 became internally displaced persons as they sought refuge in churches and other public buildings at various locations throughout Dili. Thousands of people have also started to move out of the capital city, Dili, and into the surrounding mountains and outer districts. That has also had an impact on UNOTIL itself. More than 1,000 people — families of local staff members — have come to take refuge at the UNOTIL headquarters compound.

According to a UNOTIL estimate, five persons have been killed and at least 60 injured by firearms, stone throwing or stabbing. However, there have also been repeated assertions by the leader of the 594 group that the number of deaths caused by the deployment of the F-FDTL on 28 and 29 April was far larger than officially announced. While the UNOTIL Human Rights Unit and police advisers have visited the sites and checked with local residents, they have not found any credible evidence to date that supports those allegations.

UNOTIL human rights officers will continue to monitor the human rights situation. Yet I agree with the President on the need, as expressed in his letter of 2 April to the Secretary-General (S/2006/230, annex), to address grievances through the independent commission and to strengthen the institutional foundations of the Ministry of Defence and the F-FDTL and their capacity to manage their human resources development. For that reason, the United Nations should respond to the President's request and provide civilian advisers to assist in the drafting and implementation of the organic law and in setting up management mechanisms for the Ministry of Defence and the F-FDTL.

Let me now turn to the implementation of UNOTIL's capacity-building programme for State institutions, mandated in resolution 1599 (2005). The programme has been largely successful. The transition to a sustainable development assistance framework has been completed in almost all areas. I am pleased to report that, out of the 45 positions that the Security Council established a year ago, the Government and other State institutions have identified bilateral and multilateral development partners to take over all but one of 40 positions and Timorese nationals have acquired sufficient expertise to take over the remaining five. Even in the most challenging justice sector, international legal advisers have been successful in providing cross-ministerial legal training for 32 national legal officers, including 11 judges, nine prosecutors and seven public defence lawyers, who are now fit to practice in their respective positions.

For the development of the PNTL, UNOTIL police training advisers have completed a series of

training programmes and have assisted in developing 19 operational and training manuals on the conduct of community police and specialized police forces. While a great deal of progress has been made in enhancing the professionalism of the Timorese police officers, there is still the need, as shown by the 28 April incident, for further intensive training so that they can acquire the required levels of professionalism and competency. Furthermore, there is a need to strengthen the PNTL's Professional Ethics Office and other human rights mechanisms that will serve to curb the potential for the abuse of power. I call upon the international community to provide further assistance for that purpose.

Our military training advisers, together with United Nations police training advisers, have also worked successfully towards the transfer of individual border management skills to the Border Patrol Unit — the UPF (Unidade de Patrulhamento de Fronteira), as it is called officially. However, the UPF will continue to struggle with the task of managing a 172-kilometre-long border with the insufficient number of only 296 officers having rudimentary equipment and limited experience and formal education. The UPF officers are expected to face challenges during the 2007 electoral period and would benefit from additional international assistance to prevent tensions and conflicts arising along the border during that crucial period.

On the issue of human rights, I wish to commend the Government of Timor-Leste for several important accomplishments. The Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice, an independent national institution entrusted with the legal mandate to monitor and investigate human rights violations, opened its doors to the public on 20 March this year. Another major achievement is the ratification of all seven human rights treaties by the Government, which is now in the process of completing reports under two of those Conventions. These are clear signs that this newly independent democracy is committed to fulfilling its human rights obligations at both the national and international levels.

Allow me now to present the rationale for establishing a small integrated office after the completion of UNOTIL's mandate. It is my view that such a United Nations presence would be of the utmost importance in assisting and supporting Timor-Leste in maintaining peace and stability, which constitute the enabling environment essential for the conduct of free and fair national elections in 2007.

In the preparations for the 2007 parliamentary and presidential elections, the Government has moved swiftly, with the assistance of international advisers, towards finalizing the draft electoral laws for submission to the Parliament. As the time left for the first post-independence national elections grows short, additional support should be provided in a systematic manner to all State institutions involved in the electoral process, including the Secretariat for the Technical Administration of the Elections, the independent National Electoral Commission (CNE), the Court of Appeal and other organs. In order to ensure a credible process, the CNE in particular needs adequate resources — both human and material — for monitoring and voter education throughout the 13 districts. The transparency of the electoral process will directly affect the legitimacy of the outcome of the elections and the prospects for the development of a healthy multiparty democratic system in Timor-Leste.

In aspiring to free and fair elections, I wish to emphasize that the continued presence of the United Nations police will be essential to ensure that law and order and respect for human rights are maintained before and during the electoral campaign period. The impartiality of the Timorese police cannot be guaranteed in a tense political electoral environment. United Nations police training and advisory personnel will be required to train the Timorese police on electoral policing procedures and practices, including security responsibilities during and immediately following the elections, and to assist in the monitoring of and the reporting on the conduct of elections and in the development and implementation of a comprehensive election security plan, thereby forestalling the development of volatile and possibly violent situations. The Secretary-General proposed a phased deployment with 25 United Nations police — 15 trainers and 10 advisers — during the initial period, subject to changes as the electoral campaigns intensify.

The maladies afflicting the F-FDTL internally, which are mirrored by the tragic events last week, indicate an acute need to develop the F-FDTL managerial capacity. Given the latest developments, the Secretary-General's recommendation for 10 military officers is particularly relevant. They could support the Ministry of Defence and the F-FDTL in the implementation of policies, rules and regulations,

instructions, procedures and principles governing all areas of defence and military services, such as personnel administration, personnel services, training and doctrinal development, operations, logistic systems, combat arms, communications and engineering. Those military officers would be needed in addition to the three civilian advisers who will assist the Ministry of Defence in the development of organic law and other statutory instruments governing military services. Additionally, the military officers could advise the UPF, the border patrol unit, in management of the border security operations.

With the proposed four human rights officers and the two human rights advisers under the civilian advisory group, the Human Rights Support Section will be engaged in activities to promote respect for human rights within State institutions and civil society, through capacity-building, advice and training, before, during and after the elections. The provision of an adequate number of human rights officers and advisers should be considered as an absolute necessity, particularly during the period leading up to the 2007 elections.

Lastly, the Secretary-General recommends the retention of a small Civilian Advisory Section. While the main focus of the integrated office will be electoral assistance, the new office is expected to play a more active role in interacting with the Timorese authorities, including on the issue of a reliable justice system and respect for human rights. To this end, it is essential that the international community continue to foster the genuine national commitment to justice and human rights that exists in the Government, in civil society and among the Timorese people. The 10 civilian advisory support positions include those to support the Ministry of Defence, as alluded to earlier, three public prosecutors to assist in the coordination of the prosecution services, one legal adviser to the Prime Minister and the Chief Justice of the Court of Appeal, and two human rights advisers, just mentioned, at the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice and at the National Parliament.

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that, while the leaders and the people of Timor-Leste have made significant achievements over the past five years in consolidating peace and democracy, State institutions are increasingly challenged to address the grievances of various groups and the rising expectations of the people, as well as the potential risks associated with the conduct of the first post-independence presidential and parliamentary elections. The latest developments have reminded us that not only is democracy in Timor-Leste still fragile, but also that the internal security situation is easily assailable.

As Einstein once said "the significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them". With regard to Timor-Leste, the country that was given birth by the United Nations in 1999, what is required of us now is a change in our perceptions, assumptions, or the lens through which we view this country in crisis. The leaders and the people are calling for our assistance to help them solve the problems that we did not intend to create when the United Nations helped restore their independence in 2002.

As I close this presentation, I wish to express my appreciation for the trust and confidence that the leaders and the people have shown in the United Nations. We have been learning from the Timorese people as much as they are learning from us. Finally, I wish to express my sincere appreciation to all the civilian police and military staff of UNOTIL, who have worked so hard in discharging their mandate. They are now set to return to their home countries, leaving behind a legacy of dedication, commitment and passion for peace, stability and the development of Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now invite the Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, to make a statement.

Mr. Ramos-Horta (Timor-Leste): I am here again before the Council to argue for a modest yet robust United Nations presence in Timor-Leste from May 2006 to May 2007. I am doing so against the background of the most recent developments in my country.

I will be candid in offering a sober analysis of the problems we are facing, the risks ahead, and the possibilities of continuing progress in consolidating our still fragile democracy.

In September 1999, those serving in this Council, acting swiftly on the advice of our esteemed Secretary-General, ended the violence in Timor-Leste that followed the United Nations-sponsored referendum of

30 August 1999. That was one of the United Nations finest moments.

The Council and others in the United Nations family responded to the calls of our people and of millions around the world and took swift action. Within days of the Council's historic decision to authorize the International Force, East Timor (INTERFET), Australian Hercules planes began to roar over the mountains of the rugged island, and hundreds of brave men and women in uniform disembarked.

While the Council was not able to prevent a thorough destruction of the country, it did prevent a greater human tragedy. Its decisive action saved many thousands of lives. The United Nations humanitarian agencies, coordinated by the late Sérgio Vieira de Mello, also acted swiftly and a much-feared humanitarian disaster did not materialize.

Timor-Leste remains one of the United Nations finest success stories. With Timor-Leste in 1999, the Organization entered a new and unexplored experiment in nation-building. The Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations — the Brahimi report — (S/2000/809) and the Secretary-General's High-level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change eloquently elaborated on the complexities of post-conflict periods and nation-building and made convincing arguments that for peace to be durable the international community must stay resolutely engaged.

While we must all be cognizant of the political and financial constraints that militate against ideal solutions, I nevertheless believe that a long-term plan and commitment are most effective in securing peace, and are much less costly. Our experience shows that short-term missions are inefficient and costly.

We are grateful that, following the deployment of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) and the restoration of Timor-Leste's independence, in 2002, the members of the Council authorized successive missions, namely, the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) and the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). Those consolidation missions were crucial in ensuring the functioning of vital State institutions and the enhancement of peace.

On separate occasions earlier this year, my President, the Prime Minister and I have requested the Secretary-General to establish a special political office comprising four main components: an electoral assistance component, United Nations police advisers, military liaison officers and civilian advisers. The Secretary-General responded positively to our request and recommended the establishment of a small integrated United Nations office for a period of 12 months, starting on 21 May this year. I very much hope that the members of this body will give due consideration to the request we have placed before them.

I will be candid with the members of the Council. The incidents in Dili last week were a wake-up call to us, the East Timorese leadership, as well as to the international community, that we must not take for granted the apparent tranquillity in the country and that urgent preventive measures must be taken in a resolute manner to prevent a relapse into the past of violence and instability.

I would now like to share my perception of the recent political and security developments in Timor-Leste and of the remaining requirements for the continued presence and support of the United Nations for one year, leading to the first presidential and parliamentary elections since the restoration of independence, five years ago.

As UNOTIL's mandate draws to a close, Timor-Leste is preparing for the holding of the first post-independence national elections. The Government of Timor-Leste and its people are determined, at this crucial juncture in our country's history, to ensure that the presidential and parliamentary elections are held in a free, fair and credible manner. However, recent developments indicate that threats remain to our fragile peace and stability. Let me provide the Council with more detailed background of recent political and security developments.

On 8 February, around 300 members of the armed forces demonstrated in front of the President's office, demanding a response to their petition of 15 January concerning alleged discrimination in promotions and ill-treatment. On 9 February, those soldiers agreed to return to their military base. However, although a commission of inquiry had been established, no progress was made towards resolving the issue.

In mid-March, the situation culminated in the mass dismissal of 591 soldiers, representing 40 per cent of the armed forces. On 12 April, President Xanana Gusmão held separate meetings with Prime

Minister Alkatiri and Brigadier Taur Matan Ruak. It was agreed to end the impasse by reinstating the salaries of the, now, 594 soldiers until their final status was decided, conducting a formal legal process on a case-by-case basis, not discriminating against those who were formally discharged in the competition for jobs — for instance, if they were to apply to join the national police force — and by providing Government assistance in the search for gainful employment.

On 24 April, members of the group of soldiers, along with members of their families and sympathizers, began their planned five-day march and demonstration from Tasi Tolu, west of Dili, to the cultural centre of Uma Fukun. About 1,000 to 2,000 persons participated in the demonstration on the first day.

On 25 April, the group continued to hold demonstrations, from around 8 a.m. onwards, at which an estimated 1,000 demonstrators participated. Unlike the first day, the tone of the protesters became more critical towards the Government and they requested a political solution to the demand of the 594 dismissed soldiers.

On 26 April, speeches continued, with a more anti-Government content, including by a member of the Timor-Leste armed forces (F-FDTL) in full uniform, who provocatively warned that if the problem were not resolved there would be bloodshed and that elected leaders should be removed if they could not resolve such issues. On the same day, the group's leader, Lieutenant Salsinha, accepted the Government proposal that I personally had conveyed to him. However, he also reiterated that the position of the group was that there should be resolution of their demands, otherwise they would call for a general strike.

On 27 April, Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri, with President Xanana Gusmão at his side, announced the establishment of an investigation commission to look into the allegations contained in the petition of the former F-FDTL members. The investigation commission was due to commence its work on Tuesday, 2 May. We assured the protesters that it would complete its mandate within 90 days. Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri subsequently pledged to Mr. Salsinha and his group that the Commission would complete the investigation and present its conclusions and recommendations much earlier, within one month.

The Government has appointed Senior Minister and Minister of State Administration Ms. Ana Pessoa and Vice-Minister for the Interior Alcino Barris as its representatives to serve in the investigation commission. The presidency of the Republic, the National Parliament and the judiciary have all nominated their respective representatives. The Bishops of Dili and Baucau and the NGO Forum have nominated advisers to the commission. I was informed late last night, New York time, by Prime Minister Alkatiri that the commission of investigation would began its work at once.

In the course of several days prior to 28 April, I personally held conversations with the leader of the ex-F-FDTL members, Mr. Gastão Salsinha. He stated to me that his group would accept the conclusions and recommendations of the commission. Subsequently, the senior leadership of the defence forces also stated that they would abide by the commission's conclusions and recommendations.

Following the announcement of the establishment of the commission, the group's demonstration continued, yet with no more than 800 protestors present and no more than 200 of the ex-F-FDTL soldiers present. The main speaker, Osório Leki — who is not a member of the group but a sympathetic relative, as well as the Secretary General of the PDRT party — told the demonstrators that the objective of the demonstration was not to establish a commission but to find an immediate solution to the issues. He rejected the proposal, arguing that 90 days were too long to wait for a resolution.

Here, I would like to clarify for members of the Council that I personally spent many hours — in fact, several days — in dialogue with the leaders of the military group. While they seemed to show willingness and flexibility to find a peaceful solution to the problem with the Government, I also conveyed to the military group my perception and feeling that they had seemed to have lost control of the demonstrations. Being politically inexperienced and having never organized a political demonstration, the military allowed a particular group — Coliman 2000 — to hijack their demonstration and their agenda. That was when the ex-military lost control and that group, which is essentially a mob of hooligans that were known way back in the time of UNTAET in 1999 and 2000, took control of the demonstration.

From then on it was next to impossible, short of swift police intervention, to engage in further dialogue with the military, because the military itself was no longer able to regain leadership of the demonstration. That was the reality in the days leading to the outbreak of violence.

No major damage was done in the ensuing violence that took place in the afternoon of 28 April. Subsequently, the mob broke into smaller groups and went in different directions, triggering rioting, fighting and arson in the outskirts of the city, but it was the poor neighbourhood of Tasitolu and the Taibessi market that bore the brunt of the acts of vandalism.

Most elements of the ex-military did not join in the violence and actually dispersed to various destinations. By Friday evening, five persons were reported killed and more than 30 injured, including four policemen, one of whom critically. Forty-five shacks were destroyed and 116 partially destroyed, all belonging to the poorest people living in the suburbs. No foreign national, embassy, United Nations property or major business was attacked, even though all such businesses and some embassies, including the Australian embassy, are on the main road used by the demonstrators as they left the city towards the west.

On the first day of the intervention by the defence force — which was called in to intervene by the Prime Minister in view of the failure of the police to intervene — 100 people were detained. Having detained them, the F-FDTL handed them over to the police. At no time did the F-FDTL keep any individual in detention. In the absence of any evidence of their involvement in the riots, all 100 detainees were ordered to be released by the Dili district court, which reviewed their cases on Sunday, 30 April. All 100 were released, including several former F-FDTL elements who were also in detention.

There have been unsubstantiated allegations and rumours that many more people were killed by the F-FDTL. Figures mentioned in those rumours and allegations vary from 20 to 60. However, I have personally made every effort to find out if there is any basis to such allegations. Upon hearing the first rumours about the number of people killed beyond what had been established by the police, I personally spoke at length with the F-FDTL commander, Brigadier-General Taur Matan Ruak, Interior Minister Rogerio Lobato and Police Commissioner Paulo Martins. All three emphatically denied the allegations. I also urged General Taur Matan Ruak to immediately visit the President, which he did at his private residence at about 1.00 a.m. on 30 April. The General promptly went to see the President as I had asked him to do and the two met for two hours, during which the General was able to explain to the President the absurdity and the malicious nature of those rumours.

In response to the allegations that many more than five individuals had been killed during the 28 April incidents, the Government established a commission for the verification of data on the dead and wounded. In addition, as Special Representative Hasegawa has just briefed the members of the Council, the UNOTIL Human Rights Unit, the Ombudsman and the National Red Cross were all able to carry out immediate investigations into the allegations and have found no evidence.

However, I can state here that, if all the assurances given by my Government and the initiatives it has taken, such as the establishment of a commission to look into the allegations, as well as other separate investigations referred to above, are not sufficient, as Minister for Foreign Affairs I am issuing an invitation to appropriate United Nations rapporteurs — possibly the Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions — to visit the country and carry out a thorough investigation into those and other allegations.

The situation has since calmed down. However, rumours and panic have caused an exodus from Dili to the districts. An estimated 10,000 to 15,000 Dili residents have left Dili for the rural areas. Dili has at least 180,000 people; at least 5,000 more are sheltered in churches, the UNOTIL compound, schools and so on. The central Government in Dili and the district authorities have been doing their best to deliver basic services to the people.

A positive development yesterday, 4 May, was that President Xanana Gusmão spoke on the phone with Lieutenant Salsinha, who reiterated that his group would abide by the commission's findings and recommendations. Lieutenant Salsinha has also told the President that he is seeking assurances about his safety and is ready do return to Dili. According to Prime Minister Alkatiri, Lieutenant Salsinha's safety is assured. Prime Minister Alkatiri told me last night that

many former F-FDTL soldiers have made contact with the authorities in their respective districts.

The Government has established another commission to look into the losses incurred by individuals and to propose ways to assist them.

As I speak today, Dili is on edge. Fear is palpable among a people traumatized by past violence. There are concerns about the ability of the PNTL to maintain law and order. There is concern about cohesion within the remaining F-FDTL forces. However, I wish to assure the Council that the same leadership that guided our people through the past 30 years is united and determined to overcome this new challenge.

President Xanana Gusmão and Prime Minister Alkatiri have held regular consultations and there have been frequent consultations between the two leaders with the leadership of the defence and police forces. The Government is in full control of the situation and public administration continues to function, though at a much slower pace, as many civil servants have left town. The F-FDTL has now completely returned to the barracks. The PNTL is charge of law and order.

I have personally been in regular touch with the church hierarchy and I can inform the Council that next week, upon my return, a meeting will be held involving the two bishops, President Xanana Gusmão, the Prime Minister and the other Government ministers. The meeting will serve to take stock of the situation in the country and look at ways for the State and the church to enhance relations and cooperate to ensure peace and stability.

Notwithstanding the recent security developments, the Government is moving swiftly to prepare for the upcoming elections. The draft electoral laws on the presidential and parliamentary elections were submitted to the Council of Ministers, which approved them on 26 April. The draft laws will now be sent to the national Parliament for a broad public debate, and we expect the law to be approved by the national Parliament after its recess in September. Having consulted internally and having taken due consideration of concerns raised by civil society, the church and other stakeholders, we have called upon the international community to assist us in that endeavour.

I wish now to outline the four most pertinent reasons for establishing an integrated office following the completion of the current UNOTIL mandate.

First, on the political environment, I wish to reiterate that the country is still in a consolidation phase and that democracy and peace remain fragile. As mentioned earlier, representatives from civil society organizations, the church and opposition political parties with whom I have consulted have indicated their concerns that the law enforcement agency, the PNTL, has not reached the level of maturity or attained the professionalism to fully resist political party influences. The transparency of the electoral process will directly affect the legitimacy of the outcome of the elections and the prospects for the development of a healthy, multiparty democratic system in Timor-Leste.

As concerns the timing of the elections and with the aim of precluding any unnecessary delays, the President and the Government have agreed to hold both the parliamentary and the presidential elections before or by May 2007 in order to swear in the new parliament and president by 20 May 2007.

While the Technical Secretariat for the Administration of Elections will take the lead in organizing and administering the elections, including logistics and operational activities, the National Electoral Commission will supervise electoral preparatory activities, voter education and electoral campaigns.

The United Nations electoral needs assessment mission that visited Timor-Leste in November last year has provided valuable guidance to the Government in its discussions on the electoral laws and procedures. We greatly acknowledge the important role that the National Electoral Commission will play in monitoring the electoral process and in providing voter education throughout the 13 districts. To that end, the Commission will have to be provided with sufficient financial and human resources, which naturally calls for an independent source such as the United Nations in order to ensure impartiality, transparency and fairness.

Secondly, I wish briefly to elaborate on the challenge of upholding internal stability, the rule of law and respect for human rights before, during and after the elections. While the national police force has been trained by United Nations police and bilateral partners and has the basic know-how to do routine policing, recent events demonstrated the inability of the PNTL to act decisively and swiftly in crisis situations. Its impartiality in a tense political

environment may not always be guaranteed, particularly in dealing with the first nationwide elections.

The presence of United Nations police will be vital to advise and support the national police in planning and carrying out their electorally related security responsibilities, including through training and assistance in the development and implementation of a comprehensive election security plan aimed at forestalling the development of volatile and possibly violent situations.

The main focus of the integrated office will be electoral assistance. However, other support elements will be of equal importance in ensuring a free and fair electoral process, hence our request for continued civilian advisory and human rights support. While United Nations agencies and bilateral partners have agreed to take over most of the civilian advisory posts, we feel that there is a need to strengthen the institutional foundations of the Ministry of Defence and the F-FDTL through the drafting and implementation of the organic law and other instruments for effective management. As the President stated in his letter of 2 April, Timor-Leste requires advisers who can lay the legal and institutional foundations of the security agencies.

Thirdly, the creation of a secure environment prior to, during and after the elections is of equal importance in the border region. That would require the engagement of impartial United Nations military liaison officers to monitor and advise on the security situation, and to liaise with our own Border Patrol Unit and the Indonesian military as required. Possible security risks at the border with Indonesia prior to and during the elections would certainly be mitigated through an impartial United Nations presence and professional advice on effective border management.

A small number of military liaison officers would be able to provide advice and assistance to the Timorese Government, particularly the PNTL, in liaising with our own Border Patrol Unit and the Indonesian military in the planning and conduct of proper border security operations and in monitoring the border security situation. Their presence will certainly promote a secure and peaceful environment for the conduct of elections. In the past, a United Nations presence on an international border has also proved to be an effective way of easing the tensions that arise from time to time because of misunderstandings. Such a presence can provide impartial feedback and advice so as to reduce the possibility of conflict.

Fourthly, there remains an acute need for continued international assistance to the justice sector. While the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has successfully developed a justice support programme, the funds made available are not sufficient to provide the support needed for the Office of the Prosecutor-General. Also, a significant number of human rights officers are needed to support the Office of the Ombudsman and the national Parliament to ensure that human rights considerations are fully respected in preparation for the national elections.

As I stated in my letter of 2 March to Secretary-General Kofi Annan, the type of assistance needed to ensure an environment that is conducive to the successful conduct of elections in Timor-Leste includes

> "support and facilitation, as appropriate, in key areas relevant to our political consolidation, including in the areas of reconciliation and human rights."

On the issue of establishing a reliable justice system and fostering respect for human rights, it is crucial that the international community remain committed to fostering the genuine commitment to justice and human rights that exists in the Government, in civil society and among the Timorese people.

In the light of the political and security situation and the latest developments, and in response to our modest request, the Secretary-General proposed the establishment of an integrated office, as outlined in his recent report.

In conclusion, I wish to reiterate the fact that the proposal contained in the Secretary-General's report represents the bare minimum that Timor-Leste requires. In the light of the latest developments, the Prime Minister, the President and I consider it desirable to have once again a robust international police force during the period leading to the national elections. Such a force, of at least a company strength, with appropriate logistical means, is required given the volatility and fragility of the situation. As it was in 1999, the decision is in the hands of the Security Council — a decision that will decisively influence the course of events in my country, for good or for ill.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank the Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste for his statement.

Mr. Aparicio da Silva (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, on behalf of the Argentine delegation, I should like sincerely to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of May. We would like also to congratulate the Chinese delegation for the excellent manner in which it guided the Security Council's work during the month of April.

Mr. President, allow me to begin by congratulating you for having taken the initiative to hold an open meeting on the situation in Timor-Leste. Argentina is particularly grateful for the detailed presentation on the current situation in Timor-Leste given by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa.

The Argentine delegation also wishes to acknowledge the presence of the Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, at this meeting, which demonstrates the Timorese Government's acknowledgement of the invaluable support provided by the Council to Timor-Leste in recent years. We wish to reiterate Mr. Ramos-Horta's message to the effect that the Council should not forget the Timorese people during the historic times they are living through today. Argentina, through Mr. Ramos-Horta, conveys its recognition to the brave and steadfast people of Timor-Leste.

Minister Ramos-Horta's presentation provided us with information that will help the Council better to understand the current situation in Timor-Leste and enhance its decision-making process with respect to the future of the United Nations presence in the country.

The mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) is nearing its end, and the report of the Special Representative contains a clear message: peace and democracy have not yet been consolidated in Timor-Leste, and, under those circumstances, it is fundamental to secure a continued United Nations presence in the country through the establishment of an integrated office.

The elections to be held in 2007 will represent a new phase for Timor-Leste. They will be the first elections to be held after the country gained its independence and will require broad-based international support. We wish to underline the importance of the elections being held before 20 May 2007. We must not forget that disturbances might occur that could negatively affect the peacebuilding process and the construction of a democratic State in Timor-Leste. Given these circumstances, it is indispensable that we support the country in addressing possible attempts at destabilization during the election period.

We must recognize that security remains precarious in Timor-Leste. The threat posed by militias has not yet been totally eliminated. The unrest within the armed forces and recent violent protests indicate that the progress achieved to date, which has been considerable, has not resolved the country's difficulties.

The establishment of the security sector requires further support by the United Nations, supplementing the major bilateral projects under way. In that respect, we would like to ask Minister Ramos-Horta and Mr. Hasegawa to provide us with further information on the root causes of the recent incidents in Dili.

Regarding the border with West Timor, we hope that Timor-Leste and Indonesia can soon achieve a border management agreement. We welcome the good relations between the two countries in recent years, which prove that it will not be difficult to resolve outstanding issues. We believe that the continued presence of United Nations liaison officers is important, especially considering that border demarcation is not complete and that there is no formal agreement on border management. In that context, it is also necessary to better train the Timor-Leste Border Patrol Unit. We are sure that a United Nations mission including a police adviser component will contribute to strengthening Timorese police institutions.

Another challenge that is no less important to building peace and democracy in Timor-Leste relates to strengthening the legal system. As the report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/251) indicates, there is still a need to strengthen the institutions in this field. In Timor-Leste, the police and the legal system are at a nascent stage and complementary, and they must continue receiving United Nations support. The creation of effective institutions and mechanisms geared towards the promotion and protection of human rights is something else to which Argentine attaches particular importance. My country looks forward to the report on justice and reconciliation that the Secretary-

General is preparing in line with paragraph 9 of resolution 1599 (2005). We reiterate our view that reconciliation must not be attained at the cost of justice.

A third group of challenges is the fight against poverty and the promotion of development. Here, the support of the international community will continue to be essential. Specifically, it will be fundamental to promote economic growth in Timor-Leste at levels making it possible to effectively fight poverty and ensure better distribution of the benefits of development between the country's urban and rural populations.

With scarce resources, Timor-Leste has in recent years achieved impressive progress in the fields of education and health. But 41 per cent of the population still lives below the poverty line. Here, we welcome the fact that the Timor Government's budget will grow 75.5 per cent in the fiscal year 2006-2007 and that nearly all public expenditure will be allocated to infrastructure projects, such as the construction of schools, health centres and roads.

Argentina recognizes the considerable progress that Timor-Leste has made since the previous report of the Secretary-General. The Timorese people continue on their path towards peace and democracy. However, the challenges to such process are still immense, and we therefore believe that the Security Council should support the establishment of a new United Nations mission in Timor-Leste by adopting a resolution on the basis of the report before it.

The new United Nations presence should include elements such as those requested by the Timorese Government in several communications to the Secretary General: electoral assistance, civilian advisers, police training and liaison officers for the borders and to assist in security matters. Also to be considered are elements related to capacity-building and national mechanisms for the promotion and protection of human rights as well as the promotion of justice and reconciliation in Timor-Leste. It could also provide support for development initiatives and coordinate the various bilateral cooperation projects.

In that context, we support the recommendations of the Secretary-General on the creation of an integrated United Nations office. We believe that with 35 police and civilian advisers — UNOTIL has 75 — and 10 liaison officers, of which there are currently 15 in the framework of UNOTIL, such an office could meet at least the minimum needs indicated by the Timor authorities and pointed out by Mr. Hasegawa.

To conclude, we believe that, one year away from the 2007 elections and as a culmination of the Security Council's support and involvement over the years, a new United Nations mission would focus international attention on peacebuilding in Timor-Leste, on building democracy and on promoting sustainable development.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I am pleased to welcome Mr. Ramos-Horta to the Council Chamber. We listened attentively to his statement, and we thank him for it. Our thanks go also to Mr. Hasegawa for his most interesting and thorough briefing.

I wish at the outset to convey my condolences to Mr. Ramos-Horta and to the Timorese people in the wake of the recent rioting, which claimed five lives. Such tragic events show that, notwithstanding the success of the democratic transition in Timor-Leste, the situation remains fragile. It is regrettable that it took such painful circumstances to make us realize that Mr. Ramos-Horta, Mr. Alkatiri and Mr. Gusmão have been right to underscore the fragility of the security situation in their country and, in recent letters to the Secretary-General, to request that a United Nations political mission be maintained.

The Permanent Representative of Austria will soon make a statement on behalf of the presidency of the European Union, which I fully endorse. For my part, I wish to make a number of comments.

I note first of all that, in spite of what I have just said, the situation in Timor-Leste appears to be generally stable, and that the successive United Nations missions seem to have been an outstanding success for the Organization. We welcome the approach of a gradual United Nations drawdown, which made possible a smooth transition without any break in continuity. That approach, which is consistent with the international consensus on the peacebuilding phase, needs to continue. At the same time, the gains need to be preserved.

Uncertainties remain with respect to the future, including in the following areas: preparations for the 2007 elections; demonstrations of frustration, including within the armed forces; the fight against impunity; and border control issues.

Thus, it is clear that international support continues to be necessary, as shown by the recent events to which I have referred. We cannot ignore the request by the Timorese authorities for continuation of this support.

We have carefully studied the Secretary-General's proposals on maintaining a United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. We believe that those proposals are consistent with the requests made by the Timorese authorities, and we can endorse them. Thus, we favour the establishment of a follow-on United Nations office with electoral, political, security and civilian components and a human rights section. We view that latter aspect as being of particular importance, in particular to ensure follow-up of issues related to reconciliation. In that regard, we look forward to the Secretary-General's recommendations on solutions in the areas of justice and reconciliation; we hope that the new United Nations office will be able, if necessary, to provide follow-up on such questions.

Finally, I believe it important to stress that, in this peacebuilding phase, the United Nations should not act alone. First of all, the Timorese authorities must maintain their commitment, without which there can be no peacebuilding. The many bilateral, regional and multilateral partners — I am thinking in particular of the international financial institutions — must strengthen their support so as to facilitate a smooth transition to complete stability.

In conclusion, as UNOTIL prepares to finalize its withdrawal, we must acknowledge the tremendous progress that it has made possible since its inception a year ago. The stabilization process is not yet fully complete, but it is well under way. It is certainly true that much remains to be done, and a United Nations presence will be necessary for some time to come. But Timor-Leste is clearly another example of United Nations success in peacebuilding, and I would like that to be noted.

Mr. Oshima (Japan): Thank you, Mr. President, for having convened this public meeting today on the situation in Timor-Leste, as the mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) nears its end. We are very pleased by the presence in this Chamber of the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, Mr. Ramos-Horta, and thank him for his detailed briefing. We also welcome Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and thank him for his briefing.

We note with satisfaction that nation-building efforts continue to make steady progress as Timor-Leste moves towards greater self-reliance, with the Government and the people working together, assisted in their efforts by the international community. We recognize that UNOTIL has been a valuable and trusted partner in those endeavours and has been playing an important role in providing advice and material assistance, particularly in the areas of security, governance and capacity-building. We therefore pay tribute to Mr. Hasegawa and his team on the ground for their dedication and leadership in that regard.

We also note with satisfaction the reference in the Secretary-General's report to the fact that the tasks of UNOTIL have been gradually and smoothly transferred to the Government of Timor-Leste, with the support, in the process, of bilateral and multilateral donors and other players in the international community.

We believe that peacebuilding and nation-building in Timor-Leste — as, indeed, in any other country — will be most successful if they are pursued with a firm belief in and with actual implementation of the concept of ownership. In our view, that is being actively, and generally successfully, pursued in Timor-Leste. The complementary assistance efforts being made by bilateral and multilateral donors, including support from the United Nations, have helped promote ownership by the people of Timor-Leste of the nation-building process, and that should continue to consolidate the gains achieved so far. We are determined to do all that is necessary to make Timor-Leste a proud success story of United Nations engagement in peacebuilding.

Although Timor-Leste has made encouraging, steady progress towards self-reliance, a certain degree of fragility remains in society, as the recent violent incidents in the area of Dili have clearly shown. Those incidents have occurred just as the consolidation of peace in Timor-Leste is about to take root and as the transfer of tasks from UNOTIL accelerates. We must view that as a matter of serious concern. Japan is of the view that all the efforts over the past six years of international assistance to and cooperation in Timor-Leste, and the tangible gains that those efforts have produced, must not be wasted in the final stages of international engagement. To that end, as the mandate

of UNOTIL is about to expire, the Council needs to take speedy action — action that can adequately and appropriately address the requirements on the ground in Timor-Leste at this critical juncture.

The presidential and parliamentary elections planned for 2007 will be the first general elections since independence, and are thus critically important for the further consolidation of democracy in the country. That is why we believe that appropriate support is needed from the United Nations and the international community, with a view to ensuring that the elections will be free and fair and conducted in a safe and secure environment. Japan understands and in principle supports the Secretary-General's recommendation to establish an integrated United Nations office that has election assistance as its central function. The establishment of a special political mission that focuses on electoral assistance should fully respect the ownership of the Government of Timor-Leste.

In conclusion, Japan stands ready to work with other members of the Council to forge a consensus towards the best possible approach with a view to the creation of a follow-on United Nations office, as proposed by the Secretary-General, paying due attention to the opinions of key countries that have been deeply involved in this issue in the region and beyond and of other regional actors.

I would also like to state that, as a major donor country, Japan will continue to be actively involved in bilateral development cooperation with Timor-Leste, including for the preparation of the forthcoming elections, in the interests of economic and social development and greater self-reliance and resilience in Timor-Leste. We urge all Member States to join in those efforts.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I should like at the outset to thank Mr. Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his briefing to the Council. I commend him and the staff of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) for their efforts towards consolidating peace and democracy in that nation, which gained its independence so recently.

Let me also welcome Mr. Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, who has so graciously joined us today. I would like to thank him for his excellent briefing on the situation in his country.

The journey taken to date by Timor-Leste provides excellent proof that the resources and efforts invested by the United Nations in that country are beginning to bear fruit. That justifies our confidence in the efforts of the various United Nations bodies present in the country, particularly UNOTIL, which has helped the country to make considerable progress in the areas of governance, institution-building, capacity-building and the strengthening of human rights.

We are carefully considering the proposals set out in the Secretary-General's report (S/2006/251), which we believe will assist the country in taking the final step towards peace, understanding, democracy and prosperity. The first general elections since independence are expected to take place in 2007, and Timor-Leste will clearly have great need of United Nations expertise, acquired over recent years, in preparing for elections. In addition, the Timorese police force, which is still a nascent force, does not yet have sufficient resources or expertise, particularly with respect to command. Given the forthcoming presidential and parliamentary elections, the secondment of police advisers from the United Nations to the country and their impartial presence will be a key factor. From that perspective, we believe that the Secretary-General's proposal is very constructive.

In the past we have heard Mr. Gusmão, President of Timor-Leste, and today we heard Mr. Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs, speak about the need for the United Nations to help Timor-Leste prepare for successful elections. Given the Secretary-General's assessments, we believe that establishing an integrated United Nations office to ensure follow-up would be in keeping with that effort. We would like the Government to set the dates for the elections as soon as possible.

We must also have the support of bilateral and multilateral donors and must strengthen our coordination with them in terms of current and future assistance to Timor-Leste in the area of peacebuilding. We would like to see the demarcation of the land border between Timor-Leste and Indonesia completed. In that connection, we welcome the recent high-level meeting between the President of Timor-Leste and the President of Indonesia to consider the report of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation.

In the next phase, we will be able to assess the United Nations efforts in Timor-Leste. May the example of Timor-Leste attest to the Organization's success.

Mr. De Rivero (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, and thanks him for his comprehensive and frank briefing on the situation in his country. I also wish to thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for the important work he has accomplished as head of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). In addition, we welcome the report of the Secretary-General (S/2006/251), which contains recommendations and options with regard to how the United Nations could assist Timor-Leste after UNOTIL's mandate expires, on 20 May 2006.

First, Peru wishes to express its support for the Government of Timor-Leste in the search for ways to ensure a viable State and a sustainable democracy. I wish to stress the progress that Timor-Leste has made in recent years in strengthening democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights in demarcating the land border with Indonesia and in reaching agreement with Australia on sharing maritime natural resources.

However, despite that progress, there are still few prospects for the economic viability of Timor-Leste. Four years after its independence, it remains one of the least developed countries in the world, with high rates of poverty and extreme poverty — a country where the annual per capita income is $370 and declining, half the population has no potable water, child mortality is high and life expectancy is only 55 years. That information is detailed in the 2006 national human development report published in Dili two months ago by the Government of Timor-Leste and the United Nations Development Programme.

With those economic and social indicators, it comes as no surprise that there is no political stability in Timor-Leste. That is why we regret the incidents that occurred last week. This morning, international news media reported that Dili's population continues to fear a repetition of the violence.

For those reasons, Peru believes that Timor-Leste needs a compact whereby the United Nations, the friends of Timor-Leste and the international community would provide resources to ensure the country's stability. For such a compact, it is important that the Government of Timor-Leste prepare a realistic development plan that would establish a system for distributing the income that could come from future petroleum and gas resources in order to fight poverty through programmes and plans covering areas including, in particular, the health, education and agricultural development sectors. The Government must ensure that wealth is managed in such a way that the general population is the beneficiary. In that connection, we welcome the fact that last year, the Parliament approved the creation of a petroleum fund as a single account in which all income derived from petroleum sales is to be deposited — income allocated for the country's development. That is major progress, and we support it.

Before concluding, and in the light of what was indicated earlier, my delegation wishes to state that it supports the Secretary-General's recommendations, in particular regarding the establishment of a small integrated United Nations office, for a 12-month period beginning on 21 May 2006, comprising civilian, police and military elements. That office would be mandated to help the Government of Timor-Leste, inter alia, organize the 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections, assist the leadership of the national police in planning for election-related security and continue promoting the capacity of State and governmental institutions and of national human rights protection mechanisms.

We believe those last two elements to be of particular importance, bearing in mind that although Timor-Leste has made progress in establishing basic public administration institutions, the majority of those institutions lack trained staff. Moreover, strengthening the capacities of national mechanisms to protect human rights and to promote justice and reconciliation will be crucial in the work of implementing the recommendations of the Commission for Truth — in particular regarding the acknowledgement of victims and the denial of impunity to those responsible for human rights violations. That would enable citizens to be in a better position to reconcile and integrate into a democratic and stable society.

Mr. Dolgov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We welcome the presence at today's meeting of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste. We listened closely to his very substantive statement. We also thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-

General for Timor-Leste, for presenting the Secretary-General's end of mandate report on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) (S/2006/251) and for his useful briefing.

Russia welcomes the steady progress made in Timor-Leste in the area of nation-building. We are pleased at the continued strengthening of State institutions, including law enforcement agencies, and the consolidation of the legislative infrastructure.

At the same time, we must acknowledge that Timor-Leste's potential for nationhood is still far from being sufficiently solid and that the country continues to need multifaceted international assistance in order to ensure security, stability and sustainable development. This was reaffirmed by the recent rioting in Dili, which unfortunately had tragic consequences. We sincerely hope that the Timorese authorities will find a universally acceptable solution to the conflict in the army in order to prevent a destabilization of the situation in the country. In that regard, we listened very closely to Mr. Ramos-Horta's assessment.

Russia commends the development of cooperation between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. We note the importance of the bilateral Commission for Truth and Friendship and anticipate that the Commission will successfully discharge its duties and that it will contribute to a further strengthening of the relationship between Indonesia and Timor-Leste, including by addressing issues related to human rights violations in Timor-Leste during the years of its fight for independence.

We welcome the activities of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste, headed by Mr. Hasegawa. We note the important role of other United Nations agencies and the donor community.

Given the ongoing process of the establishment of Timorese State institutions, including the defence and security structures, and the need to ensure the successful organization of presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007, and taking into account the urgent request from the Timorese leadership to maintain a United Nations presence in that country, the Russian Federation supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General to establish for 12 months a small follow-on integrated United Nations office, replacing UNOTIL, within the parameters proposed by the Secretary-General.

Mr. Brencick (United States of America): We welcome as well the presence of Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta with us today and appreciate the briefing of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hasegawa, and his continuing efforts to build a lasting peace and the basis for sustainable development in Timor-Leste. We are, like others around this table, concerned by recent developments in Timor-Leste. We urge all parties to settle their disagreements by peaceful dialogue, to protect the lives and property of all persons in Timor-Leste and to maintain strict adherence to the Constitution and laws.

In that context, and given the very recent unrest and violence and lingering fears of perhaps more, and despite the current calm, we do not believe that the proposed follow-on plan for a post-UNOTIL special political mission, however well thought out, is, at this point, timely. My delegation suggests that the Security Council consider and approve a simple one month rollover of the existing mandate of the UNOTIL mission until 20 June. This one-month extension will give the situation in East Timor fully enough time to settle and will allow Council members to get a better idea of exactly what may be needed in any follow-on mission and discuss how best to provide it.

Mr. Burian (Slovakia): I too would like to thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa for his comprehensive briefing. I also would like to welcome His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, to the Council and to thank him for his important contribution to our debate.

Since the representative of Austria will shortly make a statement on behalf of the European Union, and since Slovakia fully associates itself with that statement, I will make only a few additional comments.

We commend the progress Timor-Leste has made in many areas of State-building with the support of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). At the same time, we understand that the Government of Timor-Leste still faces formidable challenges in its drive to consolidate peace and democracy in the country. Those challenges were clearly identified by the Secretary-General in his report (S/2006/251).

The recent eruption of violence in the capital, Dili, is a sad reminder of the terrible history and of the ordeal that the people of Timor-Leste went through in 1999 and a warning that peace and stability in the country are far from guaranteed if the people of Timor-

Leste do not achieve an improvement in their difficult economic and social situation and if the fragile democracy is not strengthened. Therefore, we believe that the United Nations should continue to pay close attention to Timor-Leste and provide focused assistance in order to consolidate the investments that the Organization has already made over the past six years. In this regard, we support the Secretary-General's proposal for extending the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste by establishing a small follow-on integrated office for a period of 12 months after the UNOTIL mandate expires.

We agree with the Secretary-General that the primary task of the integrated United Nations office should be to create favourable conditions and a level playing field for truly free and democratic elections in the country. It should also exert a stabilizing influence on all segments of society throughout the period leading to elections. Besides providing electoral support to relevant State institutions, the new office should continue to assist the Government of Timor-Leste in addressing problems of security-sector reform, strengthening judicial capacities, protecting human rights and promoting justice in Timor-Leste. Further strengthening and development of critical State institutions is a task of utmost importance and thus must be properly supported by the donor community.

Last but not least, we welcome the positive developments in the relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. We believe that it is important that both countries resolve the problems of border management as soon as possible. In that regard, we would like to encourage both sides to complete the process of delineating the borders and to conclude an agreement on border management in the near future. This could substantially strengthen security and help to avoid dangerous incidents in the border area.

We also would like to see tangible progress achieved in the process of justice and reconciliation in Timor-Leste in order to bring the perpetrators of serious crimes and atrocities committed in the 1990s to justice and to close this sad chapter in the history of Timor-Leste.

In closing, we wish the people of Timor-Leste every success and would like once again to assure them of our continued support in the critical years ahead.

Mr. Vassilakis (Greece): Like others, I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hasegawa, for introducing the Secretary-General's report (S/2006/251) and updating the Council on the current situation in Timor-Leste. Furthermore, I would like to welcome His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and to thank him for his excellent and inspiring presentation.

Greece aligns itself with the statement to be made shortly by the Permanent Representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union.

In the period under review, there were positive developments but also some worrisome setbacks in the overall internal situation in Timor-Leste. We are pleased to see the full operation of the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice as well as the drafting of a national human rights action plan, to be adopted this month. However, dealing with fighting impunity for human rights crimes and abuses committed in 1999 remains an open issue. We therefore look forward to the relevant report of the Secretary-General's as requested by the Security Council.

On the other hand, the dismissal of nearly 600 soldiers and the ensuing demonstrations and violent incidents clearly show the fragile security situation and the need to reinforce the capacity of the Timorese defence institutions.

The mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) is coming to a successful end on 20 May. Over the past 12 months, UNOTIL has greatly contributed to providing the Government of Timor-Leste with effective assistance in building the State's capacity in all sectors.

In his report, the Secretary-General clearly identifies the remaining serious challenges in the fields of defence, police, justice, human rights, public administration and border control, especially in the light of the preparations for, and holding of, next year's first presidential and parliamentary elections since the country's independence in 2002.

We acknowledge and appreciate the important contributions made by bilateral donors and United Nations specialized agencies such as the United Nations Development Programme, and by institutions such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. We are also pleased to note that the Secretary-General's report underlines all activities related to the transfer of certain UNOTIL tasks to other international

actors on the ground. The question, though, is whether that kind of arrangement in providing further international assistance is sufficient for the next crucial one-year period.

The President, the Government and the political parties of Timor-Leste have asked for the establishment of a new United Nations office. Upon the request of the Security Council, the Secretary-General has presented his proposals in that regard. Greece has carefully examined the Secretary-General's proposals, and believes that they are well-structured and are tailored not only to the challenges of organizing and holding Timor-Leste's first national elections but also to the need for further strengthening State institutions and the human-resource capacity of the country. The latter is indispensable to the viability of a new democratic State.

Having considered every aspect of the needs in Timor-Leste under the present circumstances, Greece fully supports the establishment of an integrated United Nations office along the lines proposed by the Secretary-General. My delegation looks forward to working with the other members of the Council towards achieving consensus in that regard.

In conclusion, I wish to express our thanks and deep appreciation to Mr. Hasegawa and the personnel of UNOTIL for their hard work, dedication and efficiency in accomplishing the tasks of their mandate. UNOTIL, along with all previous United Nations missions in the country, has contributed to making Timor-Leste a success story of the United Nations. The people of Timor-Leste deserve a peaceful, democratic and prosperous future, and they have our full support.

Ms. Løj (Denmark): I would like to join my colleagues in welcoming Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta and Special Representative Hasegawa to the Council. I thank both of them for their statements.

In terms of peacebuilding, Timor-Leste has been one of the United Nations success stories, and we all hope it will remain so. In that regard, I would in particular like to thank the Foreign Minister for his honest account of the recent unrest and difficulties in Timor-Leste. It shows that, while the overall situation in Timor-Leste has greatly improved in recent years, we cannot afford to lose sight of the tasks still ahead. We express the hope that the present difficulties will only delay, but not alter, the previous steady course towards a smooth transition from peacebuilding to sustainable development.

I fully associate myself with the statement to be made by the representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. I shall only add a few points.

A major next step will be the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections in 2007, which will require continued international support to ensure that democracy in Timor-Leste can be further consolidated. We therefore support Timor-Leste's request for a continued United Nations political presence. However, given that many of the functions of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) are already being taken over by bilateral and multilateral development partners, the size of that presence should be limited, leaving the Timorese in the driver's seat.

We support the elements for the new mission proposed in the Secretary-General's report (S/2006/251). They include in particular the electoral, political and human rights elements; the size of the security component and the number of civilian advisers should be carefully considered in the light of the already considerable bilateral and multilateral commitments that have been made to Timor-Leste.

We look forward to the Secretary-General's report on the issue of justice and reconciliation requested by the Security Council in September 2005. As stated previously, we had hoped that the report could be released in time to guide the Council in the post-UNOTIL period. We hope it will be released as soon as possible. In that respect, we support the suggestion contained in the Secretary-General's present report that, as part of its human rights mandate, the proposed United Nations mission should assist in strengthening national capacity and mechanisms for promoting justice and reconciliation.

The success of the elections in 2007 will be crucial to secure a democratic future in Timor-Leste. Continued international assistance will be required. The Government of Timor-Leste, the United Nations and other bilateral and multilateral development partners will have to work hand in hand to ensure that peace, development and democracy are further consolidated. I think we all sense the strong commitment of the Government of Timor-Leste to take charge, as well as to form a better, more prosperous

and democratic future for its people. We strongly welcome and support that.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): Allow me to thank Special Representative Hasegawa for his briefing. In addition, and in particular at this difficult time, I would like to express our gratitude to Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta for being with us today and for his frank assessment of the current situation in Timor-Leste.

I wish to align myself with the statement to be made shortly by the representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union.

Like the other members of the Council, the United Kingdom is extremely concerned by the events of recent days, and in particular by the loss of life about which we have heard. Those events highlight the challenges that Timor-Leste continues to face. They also remind us, as the Foreign Minister has said, that we should not in any way take for granted the remarkable progress that was being made in Timor-Leste since the very difficult beginning. What is clear now is that the international community has to intensify its support for that country and for the Government, as well as to play the role that is necessary to permit Timor-Leste to respond to the challenges and to move towards lasting peace and stability. Despite the darkness of the present hour, we have to send the message loud and clear: that we stand by Timor-Leste at this time.

Building peace is never easy. Given its origins, I think that is particularly the case in Timor-Leste. I was very struck by two sentences that the Foreign Minister used. He said that Dili was on the edge and that fear was palpable among a people traumatized by past violence. That has to stay with us and remind us even more of why we have to stay the course and be committed and united to help the Government of Timor-Leste as it tackles the immediate problems and tries to address longer-term issues.

Despite the seriousness of the present situation and the recent events, it is important that we recognize the progress that has been made, as also set out in the briefing we have heard. We should also be encouraged by the steps taken to improve effective democratic governance, the adoption of key items of legislation and the continued cordial relationship between Timor-Leste and Indonesia. But what is clear is that it is all the more incumbent upon us to see further efforts made in a number of areas.

It would appear, for example, that the recent problems were caused — or at least exacerbated — by failures within State institutions, including the military and the police. Those are areas in which key bilateral partners will no doubt be looking to bolster their support and build on what they have already been providing. In particular, however, we need to do that with an eye to the presidential and parliamentary elections in 2007.

The most important role, it seems to us, in resolving the current situation and in addressing the longer-term challenges will, of course, be played by the Government of Timor-Leste. That is why it is imperative that the international community intensify its support and that the United Nations efforts focused on building and consolidating indigenous capacity actually enable the Government to take further responsibility for the reform process and to tackle the very difficult situation.

That is why, like others, we are in favour of the follow-on United Nations mission in Timor-Leste. We have heard the arguments this morning; we do not need any more persuasion. Given all the points in my brief — what I would have argued in favour of it — I am going to assume that this should happen and that we have all been carried away by the substantive arguments.

As to us, may I conclude by saying that we remain committed to working with Security Council partners, with the Secretary-General and, crucially, with the Government of Timor-Leste to try to ensure that, from the present difficult situation, as I said, we shall produce a stable, peaceful and prosperous future for the people of Timor-Leste. That must be the abiding commitment that we stick to.

Mr. Mahiga (United Republic of Tanzania): We, too, welcome the presence in the Council of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste.

We also express our thanks to Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for presenting the Secretary-General's end-of-mandate report on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL).

The United Republic of Tanzania has closely followed the impressive progress Timor-Leste has made in capacity- and institution-building and in the area of governance, and would wish to sincerely commend the people and its leadership for their perseverance and determination to succeed.

As Timor-Leste prepares to confront the challenges ahead and to engage in the long-term development of the country, account needs to be taken of the reality that the country's institutions are young and fragile, requiring considerable support. Of particular concern to us are the forthcoming parliamentary and presidential elections in mid-2007, which will mark a significant step in the process of strengthening a delicate democracy and in the overall political growth of the country.

The United Nations and other international actors need to assist Timor-Leste in all aspects of the conduct of the elections to ensure success. Special attention should be paid to the overall organizational aspect of the elections, especially the logistical element, which has so often disrupted and crippled elections elsewhere. The electoral needs of the country have to be known well in advance and, in that regard, we appreciate the fact that UNOTIL is already engaged in assessing Timor-Leste's requirements.

Given the importance of the preparatory work for the electoral season, we fully support the establishment of a smaller Council-mandated United Nations office for 12 months beyond 20 May 2006 to handle the elections and address other unfinished business. The transparency of the electoral process and the credible manner in which the elections are conducted, with the maximum participation of the Timorese electorate, will directly impact on the legitimacy of the outcome. Equally, we urge the Government to make progress on pending issues related to human rights and transitional justice.

The riots in Dili last week, which left five people dead, houses burned and other property destroyed, are a source of grave concern to us, as they came at a time when all of us had seen Timor-Leste as a success story and a model of transition from conflict to stability. It is regrettable that this potentially destabilizing incident should come at a time when the United Nations mission is coming to an end after five and half years of fruitful work. It illustrates the fragility of the security situation and the reforms of the security sector. It also confirms the need for continuing support, especially in the police and judicial sectors, as indicated in the Secretary-General's report.

A backslide into violence would mar what has otherwise been a very successful process. The Government ought to restore confidence among the civilian population in order to encourage it to return and help civilians to recover their property.

It is in that regard that we consider that, apart from ensuring free, fair and credible post-independence national elections, the follow-on office will have to continue monitoring the still fragile security situation, as well as other ongoing activities, including training members of the police force, judges, prosecutors, human rights officials, civil society leaders and customs officials; conducting seminars and workshops for the media on account of their pivotal role in the development of the country as purveyors of information; facilitating meetings between Timorese and Indonesian community leaders to discuss issues of common interest, including security, economic and cultural concerns; raising awareness amongst the local population on the agreed border area, including the remaining segment of unresolved border, together with working on other cross-border issues, such as family meetings, cross-border market activities and illegal border crossings; and working on plans and strategies for a final smooth handover from the United Nations to a sustained development framework.

We finally wish to underscore once again the importance of continued international post-UNOTIL support for Timor-Leste for the reconstruction of the country. It must be emphasized again that a critical requirement for peacebuilding is the need for the continuing attention of the international community to a country in transition in areas defined by the country concerned. That is what Timor-Leste needs at this juncture. We should robustly support its modest requests.

Mr. Zhang Yishan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation welcomes Mr. Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste, who has made a special trip to attend today's open meeting. We thank him for his detailed briefing on the current situation in Timor-Leste.

We should also like to thank Special Representative of the Secretary-General Hasegawa for

his briefing on the Secretary-General's report and the latest developments in Timor-Leste.

In 15 days, Timor-Leste will celebrate the fourth anniversary of its independence. Over the past four years, with the strong support of the international community, the Government and people of Timor-Leste have registered admirable achievements. Today, the young Timor-Leste is already firmly on the path of peaceful nation-building. China takes this opportunity to congratulate the people and Government of Timor-Leste.

We cannot forget that — from the United Nations Mission in East Timor to the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor, from the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor to the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) — the United Nations staff and the people of Timor-Leste have, with great effort, jointly written a proud success story and provided valuable experiences for United Nations peacekeeping operations and post-conflict reconstruction. As the mandate of UNOTIL draws to an end, I wish to thank and pay tribute to all its staff, Mr. Hasegawa and all his predecessors.

While we are pleased at the achievements made in Timor-Leste thus far, we should also be aware of the fact that Timor-Leste is one of the youngest and poorest countries in the world and that the path of peaceful nation-building remains difficult and challenging. The presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for 2007 not only represent an arduous undertaking for Timor-Leste but also constitute a real test of the results of the support provided that country by the international community and the United Nations.

As stated in the report of the Secretary-General, that test must be successful. The recent unfortunate incidents in Timor-Leste are a warning that the situation in Timor-Leste remains fragile, and past experience in peacekeeping operations also tells us that we must redouble our resolute efforts, especially when success is in sight.

Against that backdrop, the Chinese delegation welcomes and supports the request made by the Government of Timor-Leste for the continued support of the United Nations. We fully endorse the recommendation of the Secretary-General that an integrated United Nations office be established. We look forward to conducting serious consultations with other members of the Council and to reaching agreement as soon as possible.

Nana Effah-Apenteng (Ghana): Mr. President, at the outset, I wish to join previous speakers in welcoming the presence in our midst of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Timor-Leste. We also thank the Special Representative, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, for introducing the Secretary-General's report. We commend both of them for their frank presentations and especially for the clarity and objectivity with which the current situation in Timor-Leste has been assessed.

There is no doubt that the efforts of the United Nations have helped greatly in defusing the volatile situation that prevailed in Timor-Leste on 5 May 1999, when it launched its national independence process. Mainly as a result of the tireless efforts of the United Nations, together with the active support of donor countries, Timor-Leste is poised for the next phase of the democratic transformation that is under way. My delegation considers it appropriate to congratulate all those who have worked assiduously and sacrificed time, energy and resources to make Timor-Leste an outstanding success story in nation-building for the international community.

In saying this, I must also emphasize that there are invaluable lessons for us all in the Timor-Leste experience. No price is too high to pay for peace and stability, which, in turn, can be guaranteed most effectively by good governance, the rule of law and improved living conditions. At the heart of the residual problems of instability facing the Timor-Leste Government is the unfinished business of creating viable institutions that will enable the State to meet the needs of its people.

It is indeed disheartening that the recent demonstrations involving nearly 600 dismissed military personnel degenerated into violence, leading to the loss of lives. We are informed that the protests were driven by deeply felt grievances resulting from perceived acts of discrimination against segments of the population. We can only hope that the governance structures being put in place will lead to greater transparency and inclusiveness. The role of the United Nations in this crucial endeavour remains indispensable, and my delegation supports the proposal

by the Secretary-General to establish a follow-on integrated United Nations office.

Considering the sensitivities surrounding the findings of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation, it is also our view that only the United Nations can help manage the delicate process of balancing the imperatives of accountability with those of positive engagement and fruitful cooperation between Indonesia and Timor-Leste.

We welcome in this regard the determination of Indonesia and Timor-Leste to place friendship, cooperation and peaceful coexistence above the bitterness of the past, and we urge them to resolve expeditiously all outstanding issues relating to the demarcation of their common border. In the meantime, steps must also be taken to alleviate the suffering of the refugees and displaced persons along the border. Again, the sense of alienation felt by the inhabitants of Oecussi, who apparently are cut off from the rest of the country due to the poor infrastructure, does not augur well for national stability and must be addressed sooner rather than later.

Finally, while my delegation concedes that considerable progress has been achieved in preparing Timor-Leste for the disengagement of the United Nations mission, we believe that the timing is crucial and that, if we do get it wrong, all that has been achieved could unravel. That is why we share the view that the United Nations must remain actively engaged beyond 2007 and see through not only the elections but also the important capacity-building programmes that are urgently needed to enable the people of Timor-Leste to consolidate their hard-won independence. Let it not be said that the international community left the people of Timor-Leste in the lurch. The Security Council should continue to support the Government and the people of Timor-Leste and accede to the request by the Secretary-General to establish an integrated United Nations office along the lines set out in his report.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now make a brief statement in my capacity as the representative of the Congo.

As an old friend of the Timorese people, and on behalf of my delegation, I would like warmly to welcome the Senior Minister of Timor-Leste. Indeed, I recall that, as a young civil servant, I had the honour to meet him in Brazzaville quite some time ago. On two further occasions, representatives of East Timor's pro-independence movement came to thank the Congolese Government for supporting their cause, and the Senior Minister present here today was a member of one of those delegations. Continuing the excellent relationships between our two peoples, I had the honour to represent my Government at the festivities that were held to celebrate Timor-Leste's independence.

Thus my delegation attaches particular importance to today's debate, which offers the Council the opportunity to reaffirm the international community's solidarity with a people whose courage and determination are commensurate with the magnitude of the challenges that they have faced in the past in their quest for freedom, as well as those they face today as they seek to consolidate a situation that remains both complex and fragile.

While welcoming the progress achieved since the country achieved independence, we remain concerned by the recent incidents of armed violence as well as the violent demonstrations, which could cause further upheaval in that young nation, in particular given the upcoming 2007 elections.

The Senior Minister has had the courage and the honesty to speak in depth of those events to us and to inform us about how his Government plans to cope with this difficult situation. We can assure him of our solidarity.

The international community must therefore continue to support the efforts undertaken by the Timorese Government in all areas where international assistance is necessary and indispensable. That is why my delegation supports the recommendations contained in the report of the Secretary-General, in particular with regard to the proposal to establish an integrated United Nations office at the request of the Timorese authorities. We believe that that would be the bare minimum, as my delegation, like the Senior Minister, is of the view that we must act in the context of a long-term plan.

Finally, my delegation would like to thank the Secretary-General for the high quality of his report and also to thank Mr. Hasegawa, the Special Representative, for his excellent briefing. My delegation also congratulates the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) for its work, which must now be consolidated.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Singapore.

Mr. Cheok (Singapore): Allow me to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his recent progress report (S/2006/251) on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). I would like to commend UNOTIL and to hail the leadership of Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General. Their work has been exemplary.

It is often said that successful endeavours have many parents, while failed ones are orphans. In this context, I am glad to note that Timor-Leste has a large family. Since Timor-Leste attained full independence, its story has been one of determination in the face of adversity, perseverance and success. The Timorese have worked hard to create the conditions for a viable State. Their neighbours have shown foresight and magnanimity. The international community has been generous with its assistance and its support. The United Nations has been invaluable.

This commitment has underpinned Timor-Leste's progress. But, while Timor-Leste's development has been impressive, we need to stay the course. As a State that also had independence rather suddenly thrust upon it, Singapore knows that nation-building is a fragile thing, a delicate thing where nothing is irreversible, especially in the formative years. That is not a cliché. The Secretary-General's report makes reference to the fragile security situation. As we all know, recently there were demonstrations in Dili involving Timorese armed forces personnel and others. Senior Minister Ramos-Horta and Mr. Hasegawa have given us insightful and detailed briefings on the current conditions.

In addition, the first parliamentary and presidential elections are scheduled for next year. Timor-Leste will require electoral, organizational and security-related advice prior to the elections. The Secretary-General's report also mentions other areas where the United Nations can still help in capacity-building. These include defence, the police, border control, the legal system, finance and development planning. Indeed, while commending Timor-Leste for its "impressive progress" (*S/2006/251, para. 50*), the report adds that "many of the country's institutions are at a nascent stage and will require the continued assistance and support of the international community" (*Ibid.*).

Timor-Leste's leaders seem to share those views. They have asked for a continued United Nations presence after the completion of UNOTIL's mandate. Today, the Council has been privileged to hear a first-hand assessment from Mr. Ramos-Horta. In turn, the Secretary-General has proposed a small integrated United Nations office that would address the areas where help is needed. We urge the Security Council to support that recommendation. It is a realistic proposal that takes into account Timor-Leste's needs and current conditions. It is not a blind continuation of a mandate. It is the convergence between a new nation that wants follow-up help in its nation-building and an international community that can provide that assistance.

This is about commitment. We should not jeopardize what we have all achieved so far in Timor-Leste. Were we to do so, the phrase "penny wise, pound foolish" would come to mind, especially given statistics showing how easily societies that have experienced civil strife can return to those situations. We all speak of successful peacebuilding. Well, this is an opportunity for us to remain engaged and help ensure that Timor-Leste is a continued success. If the circumstances warrant it, Timor-Leste could even be included in the Peacebuilding Commission's agenda so that it can be supported beyond the next 12 months.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Austria.

Mr. Pfanzelter (Austria): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and the countries aligning themselves with this statement.

We warmly welcome the presence of the Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste, His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta.

Since the public meeting of the Security Council held on 23 January (see S/PV.5351), the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) has continued to provide its invaluable support to Timor-Leste. We commend UNOTIL, under the leadership of the Special Representative, Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, for its commitment and contribution. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his comprehensive and analytical end-of-mandate report on UNOTIL (S/2006/251).

The European Union is pleased to note that the process of handing over critical State functions to the Timorese authorities has gained speed. In particular, we recognize the taking over of the functions of the treasury, the first indictment for corruption by the Office of the Inspector-General and the beginning of the work of the Office of the Provedor for Human Rights and Justice as welcome and important steps in Timor-Leste's progress towards full assumption of State functions. We view the assumption of all functions related to the question of international technical advisers by the Capacity Development Coordination Unit of the Office of the Prime Minister, which is expected to take place after 20 May, in a similar light.

Recent events surrounding the dispute within the defence forces of Timor-Leste and the ensuing riots in Dili show that the situation remains volatile. Continued attention needs to be paid to the security sector. The current reports concerning a mass exodus from Dili caused by rumours about impending renewed fighting are a worrying sign of the current security climate in Timor-Leste. The European Union shares the Secretary-General's assessment that the national police is still a nascent force lacking sufficient experience and resources. Even though the overall performance of the Border Patrol Unit has improved, it still faces a number of considerable challenges, operating under even more difficult circumstances than the police. Furthermore, there are worrying reports about an increase in the number of cases of mistreatment and intimidation by the police and an inadequate or slow response to such allegations. Much remains to be done. The accountability and transparency of State institutions must be ensured.

The 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections will be at the centre of the consolidation of democracy in Timor-Leste. Transparency, inclusiveness and, above all, fairness in the election process will be decisive for the legitimacy of the results. We welcome the beginning of a dialogue on the electoral process. We hope that the planned wide consultations on the draft electoral laws will secure the broadest possible support for the electoral framework. The organization of the 2007 elections and the provision of a safe environment represent formidable challenges for Timor-Leste. International support for the election process will be crucial for its success.

It is in that context of consolidating the remarkable achievements in reconstruction and State-building and in laying the groundwork for successful elections in 2007 that the question of the future United Nations presence after the end of UNOTIL's mandate arises. The European Union believes that the Secretary-General's recommendations for the establishment of a small integrated United Nations office for one year are a good starting point for discussion on the nature of a follow-on mission, taking into account the wishes expressed in that regard by the Government of Timor-Leste and the requirements set out by the Security Council in the letter by its President of 28 March (S/2006/196). The establishment of a follow-on mission would go a long way in securing the international community's considerable investment over the past seven years and in supporting the Government at this critical juncture.

We are convinced that justice regarding the serious human rights violations in Timor-Leste in 1999 must be achieved. We welcome the Secretary-General's intention to submit soon a report on justice and reconciliation for Timor-Leste with a practically feasible approach, including possible support by the United Nations. We are pleased to note that the preservation of copies of the records of the serious crimes process has been ensured as a basis for possible future steps to ensure accountability for the crimes of 1999.

The long-term success of Timor-Leste will, to a large degree, depend on success in the economic field. The determined efforts by Timor-Leste to attain the Millennium Development Goals warrant the continued full support of the country's multilateral and bilateral partners. We welcome the efforts to enhance the coordination and integration of the activities of UNOTIL and the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. We support the envisaged elaboration of a common country programme, while taking account of the contributions of bilateral donors and the international financial institutions.

Since 1999, the European Union and its member States have been reliable development partners for Timor-Leste, contributing more than €700 million, which amounts to half of all the external assistance provided. Today, we would like to congratulate Timor-Leste on completing the ratification process of the Cotonou Agreement, by which it became a full member of the African, Caribbean and Pacific group of

countries. Timor-Leste is now a member of a political and economic body in which 14 other Pacific island countries, 63 African and Caribbean countries and 25 European Union members cooperate politically, economically and in the field of trade. That new partnership reinforces the central cooperation objective of poverty reduction and adds a political dimension and an innovative trade relationship. Timor-Leste will now benefit from EU support in the framework of the European Development Fund.

As previous speakers have said, Timor-Leste is a true success story of United Nations peacebuilding. There are, of course, considerable challenges ahead. But the European Union is convinced that Timor-Leste will continue to consolidate peace and democracy and will make progress towards long-term sustainable development. The European Union will continue to play its part in that successful development effort.

The President (*spoke in French*): I give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Salgueiro (Portugal): I would like to start by thanking the Secretary-General for the end of mandate report on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) (S/2006/251), as well as for the proposal contained therein on the establishment of a follow-on integrated United Nations office, in response to the request made by Prime Minister Mari Alkatiri in his letter of 17 January to the Secretary-General (S/2006/39, annex), and reiterated in a letter of 2 March (S/2006/157, annex) from Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta, who is present today, and in a letter of 2 April (S/2006/230, annex) from President Xanana Gusmão.

I would also like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Hasegawa, and his staff for the excellent work they have done.

Portugal subscribes to the statement just made by the representative of Austria on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add a number of comments.

I congratulate the Council on having convened this public meeting. It gives us an opportunity to hear the views of Timor-Leste, as put forward by the Foreign Minister, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and of its partners, particularly regarding the Secretary-General's proposal for the establishment of a follow-on integrated United Nations office in Timor-Leste.

I think that it is fair to say that from 1999 to date, Timor-Leste has probably been the major success story of the United Nations. There have been other good stories to tell in recent years in the context of the management of international peace and security, but none compares in terms of the degree of success achieved in Timor-Leste thus far.

I would like to pay tribute to all those who have been directly involved in that success, above all to the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan. I also would like to evoke the memory of Sergio Vieira de Mello, a man who did an outstanding job in Timor-Leste and who became a symbol for all of us. He embodied the principles and the highest values of this Organization, and he paid the ultimate price in its service.

As mentioned by the Secretary-General in his report, Timor-Leste has made impressive progress in many areas of governance, institution-building and capacity-building, with the support of UNOTIL and bilateral and multilateral partners. We also commend the people and the leadership of Timor-Leste for their perseverance and their determination to succeed. For us that is no surprise, as the Portuguese people are keenly aware of the suffering endured by the East Timorese people during their struggle for self-determination. We shared that suffering, and we celebrated together when the moment of freedom arrived at last.

The solidarity of the Portuguese people is the reason why Portugal remains, by far, the largest donor to Timor-Leste. Since 1999, Portugal has contributed more than €400 million. The Secretary-General's report mentions some of our contributions in the areas of justice and electoral assistance, but our cooperation extends to many other areas, namely, education, health, social protection, police, the armed forces, customs and finances. That puts us in the special position of being able to agree with the analysis of the Secretary-General, which takes into due consideration the requests presented by the authorities of Timor-Leste: "many of the country's institutions are at a nascent stage and will require the continued assistance and support of the international community" (*S/2006/251, para. 50*).

The presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for 2007 — the first since the country's independence — will be a major test and, we sincerely hope, "a significant step forward in the process of

strengthening this fragile democracy" (*Ibid.*), as the Secretary-General puts it.

As Security Council members recognized in the letter of 28 March from the President of the Security Council (S/2006/196) requesting the Secretary-General to present options for how the United Nations can best provide assistance to Timor-Leste following the end of UNOTIL's mandate, we must take into account that peace and democracy in Timor-Leste need to be further consolidated.

The recommendations of the Secretary-General are based on a fair analysis of the situation on the ground. We support the proposals regarding the mandate and the components of a small integrated United Nations office in Timor-Leste. Those proposals are the minimum required to face the challenges ahead. I must also underline the following points.

In recent weeks, we have witnessed some disturbing developments related to the political and security situation in Timor-Leste. The latest incidents involving ex-soldiers and the police reveal the existence of serious systemic problems within the security forces. That situation requires international support in terms of capacity-building for this critical sector. The United Nations should provide assistance to the Government of Timor-Leste in addressing some of the systemic problems within the security forces. An approach based solely on bilateral assistance programmes will not be sufficient, given the political sensitivity of this issue.

Portugal has a long-standing commitment to the promotion of human rights, especially in the case of Timor-Leste. We look forward to the report of the Secretary-General in response to the letter dated 28 September 2005 from the President of the Security Council (S/2005/613), which requested the Secretary-General to outline a "practically feasible" approach to the question of accountability in Timor-Leste. We support the Secretary-General's appeal regarding the need to ensure that all those responsible for serious crimes committed in Timor-Leste are held accountable so as to respond to the legitimate desire for justice on the part of all those affected by violence. Portugal will continue to be supportive of the initiatives taken by the Secretary-General in that regard.

Last August, the Secretary-General wrote that

> "Timor-Leste still has the lowest level of human development in East Asia and the Pacific and remains among the 20 poorest countries in the world. Moreover, economic growth is expected to be modest in 2005 due to stagnant employment opportunities, a continued downsizing of the international presence and a decline in bilateral and multilateral assistance." (*S/2005/533, para. 36*)

I also dare to say that we should not count on any miraculous solutions arising from the potential revenues from oil and gas exploitation. As stated in the same report, in the near future "the country will continue to depend on external assistance to finance its economic, social and human development and to reduce overall poverty" (*Ibid.*).

Timor-Leste has been an investment of high return for the Security Council. The case of Timor-Leste is referred to in academia and the media as an example of the indispensable role and the effectiveness of this body. But the time has not yet come for Timor-Leste to be off the Security Council's radar. We should do everything in our power to secure this investment and strengthen the fragile democracy in the world's newest country.

Portugal underlines the importance of sustained multilateral and bilateral assistance to Timor-Leste. We recall the responsibility of the international community and of the Security Council in relation to Timor-Leste. Portugal will therefore remain committed to the consolidation of peace and democracy in Timor-Leste.

May I also say that I take due note of the United States proposal of a technical rollover for the mandate of UNOTIL. I believe it is wise to reassess the situation in the light of recent developments.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Mr. Hill (Australia): Thank you, Mr. President, for the opportunity to speak. I would like to thank the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for his briefing and for the work of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). I would also like to thank my friend Mr. Ramos-Horta for attending today's meeting as Foreign Minister of Timor-Leste and for his statement. His frank acknowledgement of the recent violent incidents and instability is important, as is his communication of his Government's commitment to a

fair and just solution. I also thank him for his personal efforts to seek a resolution of those difficulties.

As all present at today's meeting would acknowledge, the role of the United Nations in Timor-Leste — from stewarding the country towards independence to assisting it in the early stages of nation-building — has been a significant success. However, the challenge of nation-building for new States and those emerging from conflict is difficult and ongoing, as recent events have illustrated.

Australia has been at the forefront of international efforts to support Timor-Leste's transition to an independent and secure State. We have contributed to all United Nations missions in Timor-Leste, and we are currently contributing both military liaison officers and civilian police advisers to UNOTIL. Through these missions, the United Nations has helped establish a foundation on which the people of Timor-Leste can build a nation. We believe that there continues to be a role for the United Nations in assisting the world's newest nation.

Timor-Leste continues to be a major development partner for Australia. In 2005 and 2006, Australia provided more than $30 million in bilateral development assistance, including working with our Timorese partners to improve health, provide basic services to rural areas, improve governance and strengthen the justice sector. Australia has provided policing assistance, including through training and other means of practical support, and is committed to a significant defence cooperation programme with the country.

In January 2006, Australia and Timor-Leste successfully concluded a bilateral treaty on maritime arrangements in the Timor Sea. Once ratified, Timor-Leste would reap billions of dollars in extra revenue, which could be employed to improve the lot of all its citizens. Similarly, Australia has been greatly encouraged by the ability of Timor-Leste to resolve issues that have arisen along its border with Indonesia. Indeed, both Indonesia and Timor-Leste should be commended for their commitment to building a productive and harmonious relationship.

I now turn to the future of United Nations involvement in Timor-Leste. As discussed in the Secretary-General's end of mandate report for UNOTIL dated 20 April 2006 (S/2006/251), it is important that the international community remain willing to assist Timor-Leste in facing the many challenges ahead. It is essential to recognize that those challenges are domestic in nature, and our assistance should be focused on helping the people of Timor-Leste to develop sustainable institutions and policies that support Timor-Leste's new democracy, its political stability, the rule of law, the future security of its people and economic growth. It is important, both symbolically and practically, that the United Nations and the international community stand beside Timor-Leste in that work.

Australia has been a long-time supporter of international efforts in Timor-Leste and of United Nations involvement and assistance to the Timorese people. Through that commitment, Australia has always sought to provide a foundation upon which the Government and the people of Timor-Leste might assume control and management of their own affairs. That should continue to be the guiding principle in determining how we might best continue to assist.

Australia is aware of the diversity of views held by members of the Security Council and the core group about the best way to deliver continuing assistance to the Timorese people and how the United Nations might best manage its engagement with Timor-Leste. It is clearly not the preference of Timor-Leste that the United Nations conclude a Security Council-mandated presence at the current time. We should consider those wishes carefully. If the Security Council decides that a specially mandated successor mission to UNOTIL is required for a limited time, that mission should be focused and properly staffed to complement ongoing cooperation. It should be funded from the regular budget. If such a mission is agreed, Australia would of course consider making a contribution.

As I have said, the goal of the international community in Timor-Leste should be the people of Timor-Leste taking full control of the country's own affairs.

Australia recognizes that the international community has made a considerable investment in Timor-Leste's progress as a nation. We would encourage Timor-Leste's many international supporters to maintain their bilateral and other forms of multilateral assistance in order to ensure Timor-Leste continues along its path to a stable and sustainable future.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of New Zealand.

Ms. Banks (New Zealand): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for the latest report on the situation in Timor-Leste and for his recommendations on future United Nations involvement.

New Zealand commends the progress made in Timor-Leste to date through the work of the Timor-Leste Government, the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) and through the commitment of international donors who continue to support these efforts. But as we have witnessed over the last days in Dili, Timor-Leste remains fragile. We are grateful for the presentations given this morning by the Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. José Ramos-Horta, and by the Secretary-General's Special Representative, Mr. Hasegawa, to update us on the current situation in Timor-Leste.

These developments underline the crucial role of the international community in continuing to provide support.

New Zealand supports the extension of the United Nations mandate in Timor-Leste and the establishment of a new special political mission with a specific focus on assisting Timor-Leste in the period leading up to next year's elections. On that basis, New Zealand supports the shape and scope of the mission as recommended by the Secretary-General.

The United Nations role in Timor-Leste is in transition from the full-scale operations of the past to the current UNOTIL arrangements, and now to the proposed integrated United Nations office. However, neither the current arrangements nor the proposed integrated mission can guarantee domestic peace and security in Timor-Leste. Engagement by bilateral partners and by appropriate multilateral agencies will be paramount in supporting the rule of law and in building the institutions of democracy in Timor-Leste. This includes training and support for the police and the military, as well as helping the Government to achieve its social and economic development goals.

New Zealand has consistently supported the work of the Serious Crimes Unit and the special panels, which are essential components of an internationally supported process to see justice served for crimes committed in East Timor in 1999. We look forward to the report on justice and reconciliation that the Secretary-General has indicated he will provide to the Security Council, including possible support by the United Nations.

New Zealand is a committed bilateral partner with Timor-Leste. We will continue to provide assistance in training and support for the police, the military and the Government through our Overseas Development Assistance and our Defence Force Mutual Assistance Programme.

Looking ahead, the specialized agencies will eventually become the long-term cornerstones of the United Nations presence in Timor-Leste. With that in mind, we call on those agencies to work with the proposed United Nations office in Timor-Leste to ensure a coordinated, system-wide approach to the eventual transition.

We share the hope that the situation in Dili will return to normal as quickly as possible, and that reason, wisdom and cool heads will prevail. At this time, it is important that the United Nations system and all of us in the international community send the message that we are committed to supporting and assisting Timor-Leste for the long term.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I would like to welcome Foreign Minister José Ramos-Horta, whose presence in the Security Council today is essential to convey the will of the East Timorese people to the entire membership of the Organization. In his statement, Minister Ramos-Horta was quite clear about the present situation in his country and the need for the United Nations to retain its presence in the field.

(*spoke in French*)

I would also like to thank the Congolese presidency of the Security Council for convening this public meeting on the situation in Timor-Leste, which remains a priority for Brazilian diplomacy.

(*spoke in English*)

I wish to acknowledge Ambassador Wang Guangya and the members of the Chinese delegation for their highly competent work in the presidency last month.

Finally, I thank Special Representative Sukehiro Hasegawa for his detailed and valuable presentation

and especially for his tireless dedication at the head of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) in promoting the empowerment and development of Timor-Leste.

As a country that has been assisting Timor-Leste ever since the beginning of the crisis of 1999, Brazil is particularly encouraged by the country's remarkable progress in the last six years. The ravaged scenario of those gloomy days has changed into a hopeful nascent nation. Brazil looks forward to the coming 2007 elections, the first since independence. We believe that the successful holding of presidential and parliamentary elections will represent a major step toward the consolidation of democratic institutions in the country.

Most of the merit of this transformation lies with the Timorese people, who never gave up in spite of all adversities. The international community also deserves credit for what has been accomplished. The four United Nations missions so far — the United Nations Mission in East Timor (UNAMET), the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET), the United Nations Mission of Support of East Timor (UNMISET) and UNOTIL — were crucial in assisting the East Timorese to stand on their feet and hold the future in their hands. Multilateral and bilateral cooperation in several areas is also part of the manifold effort to ensure that Timor-Leste becomes a full-fledged State. It is our view that the United Nations should remain engaged as long as international support is necessary to secure a stable and sustainable governmental structure for the country.

The Brazilian contribution to the United Nations missions in the country is only a part of our cooperation with Timor-Leste. We maintain bilateral projects in such diverse areas as eradication of illiteracy and the fight against HIV/AIDS, in structuring the judiciary and agriculture, in professional training and institution building. We have recently renewed electoral cooperation with Timor-Leste, which we believe is essential, at this point in time, to strengthen the institutions for the upcoming elections. Our cooperation with the Timorese Government and people stems from the consciousness of a common historic heritage and solidarity, as well as our confidence in the principle of self-determination.

There is a consensus that Timor-Leste is meant to be a success story for the United Nations. The investment made by the Organization in the last six years was enormous and has so far obtained a very positive return. But there is still much to be done, and the assistance of the United Nations remains crucial.

Brazil, alongside other partners and the East Timorese Government, believes that the proposal advanced in the Secretary-General's recent report represents the minimum necessary to ensure that Timor-Leste continues to be a success story. The structure proposed is meant to strengthen local institutions and to make the security apparatus fully functional. Thus, the Security Council should create a new mission — an integrated office — comprising all components proposed by the Secretary-General, namely, military, police, civil, electoral and human rights components.

Despite its positive evolution, the situation in Timor-Leste remains fragile. State institutions and democratic practices are still evolving and require assistance from the United Nations. Recent evidence confirms that security is still a source of serious concern. More than just bilateral cooperation will be needed in order to enable Timor-Leste to overcome its present difficulties. Moreover, restricting the scope of United Nations activities will be interpreted by those who do not abide by democratic principles and practices as a sure sign that the United Nations might be about to reconsider its commitment to Timor-Leste.

The boundaries between Timor-Leste and Indonesia are yet to be fully demarcated. Military liaison officers are needed to defuse incidents and to promote dialogue between the Indonesian armed forces and the Timorese Border Patrol Unit. Providing advisers to improve the institution of Timor-Leste's national police is another fundamental task to ensure the rule of law.

The United Nations and, indeed, its Member States are not in a position to waste the human and financial investment made in recent years by not joining in the efforts to avoid a relapse into instability. No budgetary savings would be justifiable if they were to allow a predictable resumption of problems that would entail further human suffering and future increased expenditures. In that regard, Brazil welcomes the initiatives proposed by Timor-Leste to investigate the claims of the disaffected members of the military in order to attain national reconciliation.

Recent outbursts of violence confirm that the political atmosphere is still volatile and that instability could increase in the coming months before the 2007 elections, jeopardizing our common accomplishments. Brazil remains entirely committed to help make Timor-Leste a success story — for its Government, for its people and for the United Nations — by combining national ownership, the rule of law and far-sighted international support. Any hesitation on the part of the Council would cast doubt on its steadfastness. In that sense, piecemeal solutions are neither positive nor viable. In our view, the Security Council must at this time deliver a strong, unequivocal message of support for Timor-Leste.

The President (*spoke in French*): I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Hamidon (Malaysia): I offer my sincere congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month, and to the Permanent Representative of China for his stewardship of the Council last month. I would also like to acknowledge the presence in the Chamber of His Excellency Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Timor-Leste. I welcome his valuable contributions to the deliberations today.

My delegation is pleased to address the Security Council on the situation in Timor-Leste at the end of the mandate of the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL). We express our sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report (S/2006/251) on the end of the mandate of UNOTIL. We also thank Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, for his clear and comprehensive presentation of the report. We commend the Special Representative and all the men and women of UNOTIL for their dedication in discharging the mandate entrusted to the mission by the Security Council.

I am pleased to note that the activities carried out by the United Nations and by the United Nations system, as well as the contributions made by UNOTIL, have continued to provide a window of opportunity for progress in Timor-Leste, particularly with regard to the transition to a sustainable development assistance framework. The United Nations has played a remarkable role in peacebuilding in Timor-Leste through its various missions since 1999, initially by providing security and facilitating the country's emergence from conflict and subsequently by nurturing the development of political, economic, social, legal and judicial institutions. In the past year, the United Nations has also supported Timor-Leste's development needs through UNOTIL. The significant progress made by Timor-Leste during the reporting period, from 14 January to 12 April 2006, demonstrates its firm commitment towards the achievement of poverty reduction and economic growth. That progress has also strengthened the efforts made towards the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

The specific activities undertaken by respective agencies — the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme, the International Monetary Fund, the Asian Development Bank, the United Nations Development Fund for Women, the World Food Programme, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Population Fund, UNICEF, UNESCO, the International Labour Organization, the World Health Organization, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the International Organization for Migration — with the close cooperation of the Government, have helped Timor-Leste to achieve impressive progress in many areas of governance, institution-building and capacity-building, to meet its social, economic and human development needs within a sustainable development programme. Those advances could not have been achieved without the full commitment, the determination and the strong resolve of the country's leadership and the support of the Timorese in general, coupled with sustained assistance and cooperation from the international community.

Nevertheless, many of the country's institutions are still at a nascent stage, and will require the continued assistance and support of the international community. My delegation notes that, as UNOTIL's mandate comes to an end, one of the main challenges facing the country relates to the need to consolidate the progress that has been made in laying the foundations for a democratic system. The presidential and parliamentary elections scheduled for 2007 will be a significant step forward. Those elections will be a test for the maturity of democracy in Timor-Leste. That is indeed an important point for the international community, including the Security Council, to note. There is a need for the continued presence of the United Nations not only to provide impartial support for the conduct of free and fair elections, but also as a stabilizing influence on all segments of society

throughout the period leading to the elections. In that regard, Malaysia supports the recommendation of the Secretary-General regarding the establishment of an integrated United Nations office comprising civilian, police and military elements, for a period of 12 months commencing on 21 May 2006, to undertake the challenges of the approaching elections.

My delegation is concerned about the troubling developments related to the disgruntled portion of the Timorese armed forces, as well as about how little progress has been made towards resolving the issues. Today it was reported that tens of thousands of residents of Dili had fled the capital fearing new clashes between the former soldiers and the police. We are, however, encouraged by the steps already taken by the Government to contain the disturbances. We hope that it will continue to work towards an amicable solution in order to end the impasse.

It is encouraging to note the growing relations between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, as manifested in the recent meeting in Bali between President Xanana Gusmão and his Indonesian counterpart, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. The strengthening of relations between the two neighbouring countries augurs well for them, including in their continued efforts to delineate the land borders between them. We are confident that both countries will continue to be able to resolve their bilateral issues in the spirit of friendship and cooperation.

As a neighbour, Malaysia reiterates its commitment to nation-building in, and the development of, Timor-Leste. We have offered earlier assistance bilaterally and will continue to explore new areas of assistance with the Government of Timor-Leste. We remain in full support of the United Nations activities in post-UNOTIL assistance, especially regarding the efforts of the Government and the people of Timor-Leste as they prepare to meet the challenges of their first presidential and parliamentary elections. With their perseverance and their determination to succeed, along with the support of the United Nations and the international community, Malaysia is convinced that Timor-Leste will continue to make progress in its nation-building.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Thailand.

Mrs. Laohaphan (Thailand): From the outset, I would like to express my gratitude to you, Sir, and the Security Council for allowing me to participate in this public meeting on Timor-Leste.

I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the presence of Mr. José Ramos-Horta, Senior Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste, and to thank him for his detailed briefing.

My delegation wishes to commend Mr. Sukehiro Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste, for his working accomplishments in Timor-Leste and for his comprehensive briefing on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL) to the Council.

Thailand is encouraged to learn that much progress has been made steadily to achieve the prosperity of Timor-Leste and the well-being of the Timorese people. That is due to the valuable contributions of UNOTIL, agencies of the United Nations system, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and international donors. A tribute should also be paid to the Government of Timor-Leste for its strong determination and strenuous efforts. All parties concerned have played crucial roles in moving forward the nation-building process in Timor-Leste.

Although developments in Timor-Leste — be they political, economic or social — have been achieved on many levels, the work is not yet complete. Timor-Leste remains in a phase of trials and tribulations. There are challenges that the country is meeting, and more that it will have to face in the future. My delegation believes that Timor-Leste, as an emerging country, has a long way to go. As an emerging democracy, Timor-Leste is a small plant that needs all the care and tending of us all to help it grow into a big tree and for its roots of democracy to grow stronger and deeper.

My delegation would like to emphasize the importance of the development dimension of assistance, an area to which less attention has been paid. Its long-term benefits to Timor-Leste are equally as important as those of the security and justice dimensions. While there is a need to create a safe and secure environment for the Timorese people, there is also a need to improve their livelihoods and quality of life. That is the human face of assistance. Capacity-building, training and education, we believe, will bring out the greater and the better from Timor-Leste in the

long run. International assistance — any assistance — would be meaningless without lasting security, stability and prosperity in the country.

My delegation would like to take this opportunity to reiterate Thailand's firm commitment to continuing its economic and technical cooperation with Timor-Leste in order to further support the Timorese national development process, especially in the field of human resource development. In 2003, the Foreign Ministers of Thailand and Timor-Leste signed a memorandum of understanding on economic and technical cooperation. Ten areas of technical cooperation between the two countries have been pursued for the past three years, including in capacity-building in internal security, agriculture, tourism, geographical information technology, and sufficiency economy. Recently, Thailand and Timor-Leste have agreed to extend the memorandum of understanding to cover two more years in 2006 and 2007.

Also, we wish to reaffirm Thailand's readiness and willingness to cooperate in rendering assistance to and building the capacities of Timor-Leste with the United Nations agencies, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and international donors. In partnership with donor countries and international organizations, Thailand has cooperated with the United Nations Development Programme, the Japan International Cooperation Agency and UNICEF in organizing capacity-building programmes for Timor-Leste, especially in the fields of agriculture, HIV/AIDS and family health.

Different views have been expressed concerning the role of the United Nations in Timor-Leste after the end of UNOTIL's mandate. Thailand could not agree more that the United Nations and the international community will soon have to phase out their participation, but that time has not yet come. Indeed, while we are gradually withdrawing from Timor-Leste, it will be some time before Timor-Leste can stand on its own and before we can leave Timor-Leste to stand on its own. In fact, we need to approach the phase-out step by step.

The recent tensions in Timor-Leste have already demonstrated that the country is fragile and its political environment volatile. We would have failed to achieve anything were we to leave Timor-Leste now and run the risk of losing all the gains we have helped make thus far in the country. The success of the presidential and general elections in 2007 will be a crucial milestone of democracy in Timor-Leste.

In that connection, my delegation wishes to express Thailand's support for the recommendation made by the Secretary-General that a reduced-size office be set up in Timor-Leste to continue the work of the United Nations in rendering assistance to the Timorese Government and its people so that we can ensure that the gains made thus far will be protected and consolidated. My delegation is of the view that this is one of the steps of the phase-out process out and that we should not completely withdraw from Timor-Leste.

My delegation believes that Timor-Leste is a country with great potential. However, its promising future can be further guaranteed only if we all help to guarantee it. The international community needs to actively help nurture and thereby increase the country's potential so that it can eventually stand firmly on its own and prosper alongside the community of nations.

The President (*spoke in French*): I call on the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Jenie (Indonesia): I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of your important responsibility as President of the Council for this month. We are confident that, under your able stewardship, the Council will do productive work this month.

We thank the Secretary-General for his end-of-mandate report on the United Nations Office in Timor-Leste (UNOTIL), as contained in document S/2006/251. In that regard, my delegation expresses its appreciation to Special Representative Hasegawa for his useful briefing and for his leadership in bringing the UNOTIL mandate towards a successful conclusion.

Before I continue, allow me also to join previous speakers in welcoming Senior Minister José Ramos-Horta of Timor-Leste to our debate today. We have taken note of his briefing on the internal security situation in the country following the recent riots. We are following it closely and hope that a quick solution can be found in order to return the situation to normal as soon as possible.

We take note with appreciation of the progress made by UNOTIL in assisting Timor-Leste towards self-sufficiency and in ensuring a smooth transition from the current United Nations assistance to the country towards a sustainable development framework. Of no less importance to note is the impressive

progress made by Timor-Leste in many areas of governance, institution-building and capacity-building, thanks to the perseverance and determination of its people and leadership, as acknowledged in the Secretary-General's report.

We recognize, however, that, as UNOTIL's mandate comes to an end, continued international assistance and support are needed for Timor-Leste to face the challenges before it, and especially to consolidate the progress made in laying down a stronger foundation for a democratic system. One of the enormous challenges ahead is the preparation and conduct of its first parliamentary and presidential elections, which are scheduled for 2007. Indonesia, as the world's third largest democracy and as the closest neighbour of Timor-Leste, is very much interested in seeing it succeed in conducting the elections in a peaceful, free and fair manner. We therefore believe that the international community must respond favourably to the needs of Timor-Leste for assistance and support in meeting that challenge.

We are satisfied with the excellent level of our bilateral relations with Timor-Leste. The close rapport between leaders of the two countries continues to grow. During this UNOTIL reporting period, President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of Indonesia met once again with his counterpart, President Gusmão of Timor-Leste, in Bali on 17 February to discuss issues of common interest and concern of both countries. Just last month, Foreign Minister Hassan Wirajuda welcomed the visit of Minister Ramos-Horta to Jakarta to address issues of importance to both countries. That attests to the maturity of bilateral relations that enable both countries effectively to deal with any issues and problems that arise between them.

The bilateral cooperation between Indonesia and Timor-Leste also continues to deepen and expand. Through the two countries' joint commission and its subsidiary mechanisms, we continue to register further progress in various areas, including the political, legal, economic, trade, investment, cultural, health and education fields. Both countries also continue to make progress in addressing effectively and conclusively the residual issues arising from the separation of Timor-Leste from Indonesia as an independent State in 1999.

With regard to cooperation on matters relating to the border, I am pleased to inform the Council that the delineation of the remaining 1 per cent of the land border between both countries is expected to be completed by August. Indonesia also looks forwards to finalizing a new border management arrangement with Timor-Leste to replace the military liaison arrangement between the Indonesian military and the United Nations Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET), which expired in June 2005. Meanwhile, cooperation on border security continues to be strengthened, and the absence of incidents along the border during this UNOTIL reporting period attests to that.

In conclusion, Indonesia, as a neighbour which shares a common vision with Timor-Leste based on the principles of peaceful coexistence and forward-looking, reconciliatory and mutually beneficial relations, will, for its part, continue to assist Timor-Leste in achieving self-sufficiency, including better enabling it to make further progress in fostering peace, stability and democracy in the country. In that regard, the Government of Indonesia, on a bilateral basis, also stands ready to be of assistance to Timor-Leste in ensuring the smooth, peaceful, free, fair and credible conduct of its first elections next year.

The President (*spoke in French*): I shall now give the floor to Mr. Hasegawa, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, to respond to the comments made and questions raised during the discussion.

Mr. Hasegawa: I wish to express my own and Foreign Minister Ramos-Horta's appreciation for the insightful and encouraging comments made by members of the Security Council and other delegations. I wish simply to respond to the question raised by the Argentine representative, Mr. Apparicio da Silva, about the root causes of the recent incidents in Dili.

I believe that the conflict that erupted two weeks ago has three root causes.

The first is the institutional inability to address the grievances of personnel due to the lack of a viable vision or policy regarding human resources management, mostly in the Timorese armed forces (F-FDTL).

The second root cause, I believe, is the poverty and unemployment that continue to prevail in the country, particularly among young people, who have nothing, and nothing to lose.

The third root cause is the mindset and tendency of politically oriented interest groups to resort to

violence to incite the population and gain greater influence. Indeed, given the nascent character of the political system, continued assistance is needed from the international community.

The President (*spoke in French*): I thank Mr. Hasegawa for the clarifications he has provided.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list.

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.25 p.m.